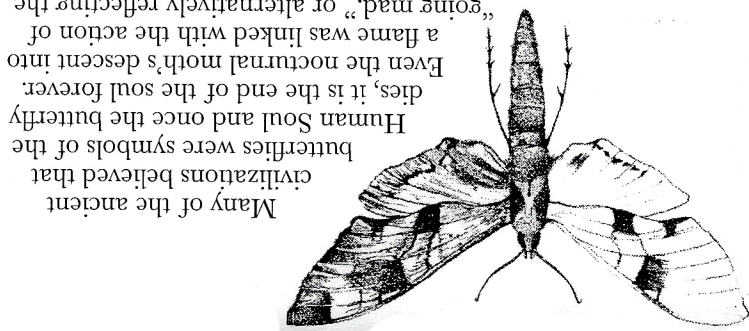


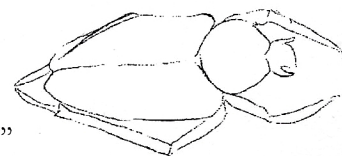
Coleoptera
Beetles & Weevils

- There are 166 families and 370,000 species of beetle in the world (some speculations vary) making it the most varied of insects and an order that has successfully colonized every category of terrestrial and freshwater habitat.
- Beetles possess toughened, leathery forewings known as Elytra which protect the larger more fragile hind wings that are folded underneath. This shield-like feature has enabled beetles the capability to dig and burrow in harsh grounds, squeeze in tight places and survive in aquatic habitats as well.
- Beetles are vastly varied in speciation due to the co-evolution and exploitation of the rapidly evolving angiosperms, which their diet consists of. This process began to occur about 65 million years ago.



Many of the ancient civilizations believed that butterflies were symbols of the Human Soul and once the butterfly dies, it is the end of the soul forever. Even the nocturnal moth's descent into a flame was linked with the action of "going mad," or alternatively reflecting the trials one must endure to eliminate the physical body and understand the truths and joys of beyond. In Greek, the word for butterfly is "psyche" which literally translates to soul.

- The myth of Eros and Psyche represents the ultimate story of love and transformation, even the moth's attraction and destruction by flame is illustrated by Psyche looking upon her lover by candlelight- signaling her downfall and her journey through hardships to reemerge transformed.
- In Native American mythology, the Blackfoot believed that during sleep dreams are brought to us by butterflies. It was also customary for women to embroider the sign of the butterfly on a small piece of buckskin and tie it in her baby's hair when she wished it to go to sleep.
- In Chinese and Japanese cultures, butterflies represent longevity, happiness, luck, young maidens and marital bliss. Visitation from butterflies also signify a loved one or a departed relative.
- There is an Irish saying that reveals, "Butterflies are the souls of the dead waiting to pass through Purgatory."



"Lady Bird, Lady Bird,
Fly away home,
Your house is on fire,
Your children will burn."

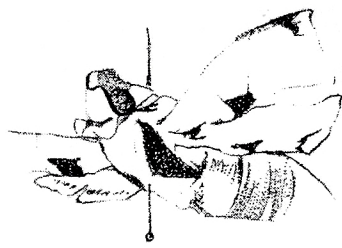
- One theory of this rhyme is that it may reference the burning of hop vines to clear fields.

- Some believe that you must also send it along with a rhyme. A common British variation goes:
- It is believed to be a sign of good fortune if a Lady Bug should alight on your clothes or person, but will instantly invoke the opposite effects if it is killed or injured.
- Another beetle associated with the sun due to its coloring is the Lady Bug, or Lady Bird and holds a number of common myths and superstitions in the US and Great Britain.

- In the Mediterranean region, people once believed that life, especially that of insects rose spontaneously from decomposing matter. Interestingly, the Egyptians had confused the processes of feeding and reproduction for the Scarab Beetle, or dung beetle and thought that the eggs hatching from the ball of dung were suddenly generated from the earth- therefore furthering the evidence of their connection to the divine. The Egyptians had also observed the Scarab roll it's meal back to the burrow and associated the motion with that of the Sun crossing the sky. The Scarab subsequently became sacred to Ra, the god of the sun.

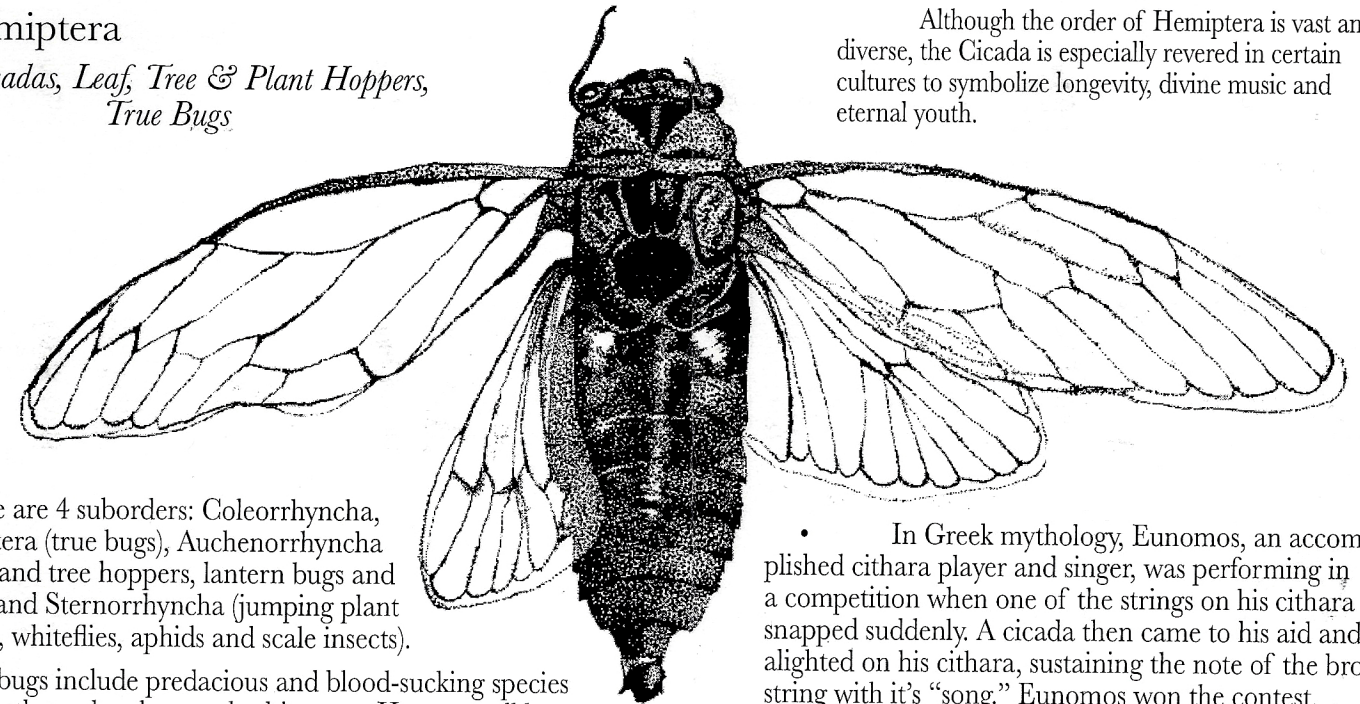
Lepidoptera
Moths & Butterflies

- Scientifically, there is little distinction between the two. Both groups contain tiny, overlapping scales on the body and wings and develop multi-segmented antennae. However, moths do typically fly at night while butterflies inhabit the daylight hours.
- Courtship involves displays and odors, specific scents that are carried downwind and picked up by a potential mate's antennae.
- There are 4-9 larval stages and both undergo complete metamorphosis. Most caterpillars shed their skins 5 or 6 times as they grow, and the appearance of each stage could be remarkably different from the last. These changes into recognizable stages may ascribe to the calculated low survival rate of most caterpillars.
- During the Pupal stage, the caterpillar's physical body is liquefied and reformed within a chrysalis and reemerges as the adult moth or butterfly- a process which has fascinated human existence even from the times of ancient civilizations.



Hemiptera

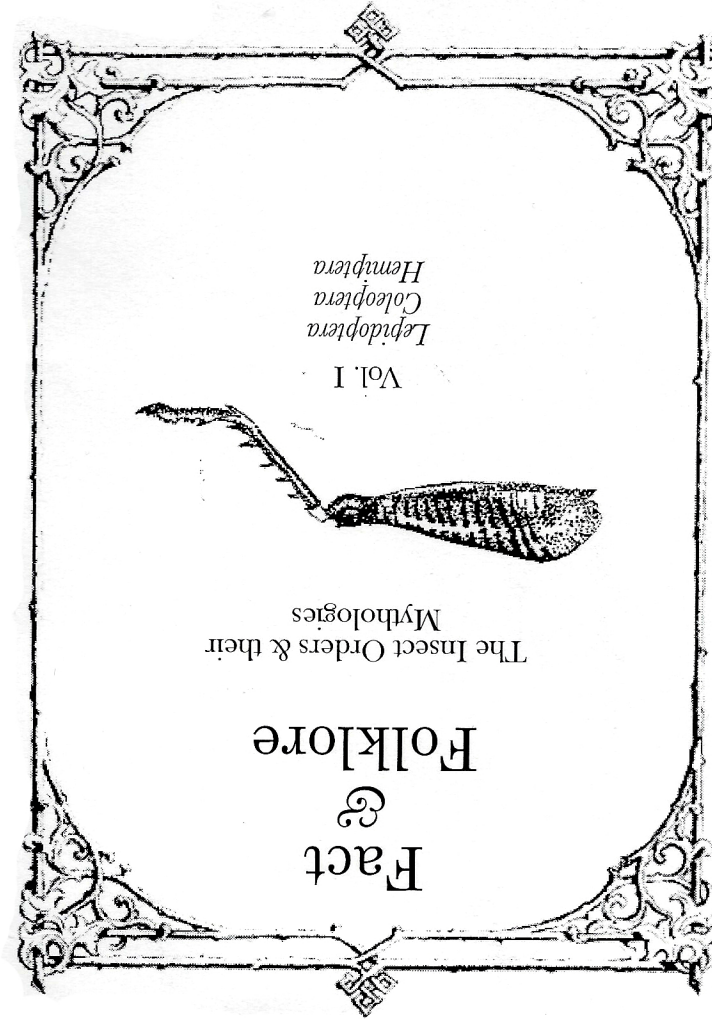
*Cicadas, Leaf, Tree & Plant Hoppers,
True Bugs*



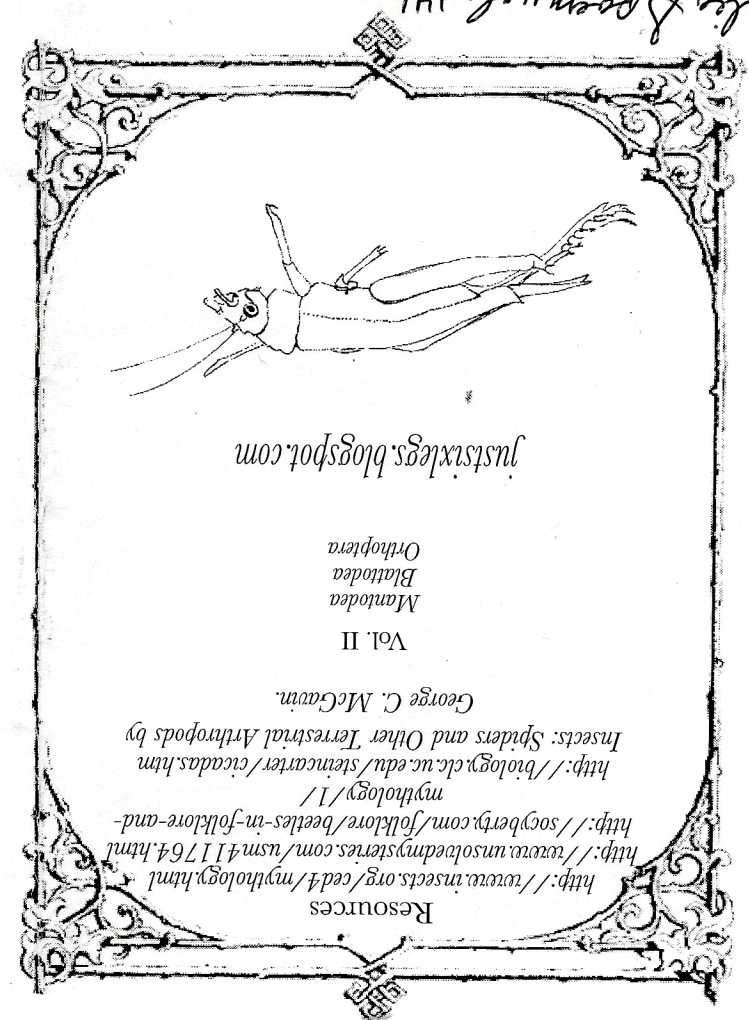
Although the order of Hemiptera is vast and diverse, the Cicada is especially revered in certain cultures to symbolize longevity, divine music and eternal youth.

- There are 4 suborders: Coleorrhyncha, Heteroptera (true bugs), Auchenorrhyncha (plant, leaf and tree hoppers, lantern bugs and Cicadas) and Sternorrhyncha (jumping plant lice, whiteflies, aphids and scale insects).
- True bugs include predacious and blood-sucking species but the other suborders are herbivorous. However, all bugs possess piercing, sucking mouth parts that form a long rostrum consisting of slender stylets sheathed by the labium.
- Some bugs produce live offspring and some can reproduce asexually.
- Metamorphosis is incomplete.

- In Greek mythology, Eunomos, an accomplished cithara player and singer, was performing in a competition when one of the strings on his cithara snapped suddenly. A cicada then came to his aid and alighted on his cithara, sustaining the note of the broken string with its "song." Eunomos won the contest.
- Gene Kritsky has reported that in China, shed skins or actual nymphs from a species of cicada (all of which are silent) are collected and ground up. A tea made from these skins is given to noisy, crying babies (in-likeness to noisy adult cicadas), in hopes of quieting them. Similarly, the shed skins are used to treat "ringing in the ears."



Fact & Folklore
The Insect Orders & their Mythologies
*Lepidoptera
Coleoptera
Hemiptera*



Resources
<http://www.insects.org/ced4/mythology.html>
<http://www.unsolvedmysteries.com/usm41764.html>
<http://society.com/folklore/beetles-in-folklore-and-mythology/1/>
<http://biology.cic.uc.edu/stemcarter/cicadas.htm>
Insects: Spiders and Other Terrestrial Arthropods by George C. McGavin.
Vol. II
Mantodea
Blattodea
Orthoptera
justsivilegs.blogspot.com

Julia & Rosemary 14/17